

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: Indoor Environments: Reducing Public Exposure to Indoor Pollutants

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP No: EPA -OAR-ORIA-09-09

CFDA: 66.034

SUMMARY: Formal Agency responses to questions regarding the subject RFP

Date: August 13, 2009

Q1: In the announcement on the grants.gov web site, it lists the CFDA number and then this descriptor:

CFDA Number(s): 66.034 -- Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Demonstrations and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act

Can we include surveys as part of our activities under this RFP? In the past surveys were prohibited.

A1: Yes, your organization may propose surveys as part of the activities it will carry out if EPA awards your organization a cooperative agreement under this RFP. Surveys are authorized by the statutory authority for the cooperative agreement, the program description in the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance and are not prohibited by the terms of the RFP. However, using EPA funds to develop and administer a survey may lead to substantial delays in the performance of your cooperative agreement and impose substantial administrative burdens on EPA and your organization. OMB regulations implementing the Paperwork Reduction Act require EPA to obtain "information collection request" (ICR) authorization if a recipient of a cooperative agreement uses EPA funds to develop and administer a survey which asks identical questions to ten or more persons. The ICR approval process is complex and requires a significant amount of time to complete. Please review OMB regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 for details <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&rgn=div5&view=text&node=5:3.0.2.3.9&idno=5>.

Successful applicants can design and administer surveys with their own funds, and use EPA cooperative agreement funds to analyze and distribute the results of the survey without triggering the need for EPA to obtain an ICR. In addition, OMB regulations at 5 CFR 1320.3(h)(4) provide that EPA does not need to obtain an ICR for cooperative agreement recipients to use EPA funds to design and administer pre and post training tests for program participants.

Q2. Our organization is considering proposing a project that will involve..... Please provide advice as to whether this project is acceptable under this RFP EPA -OAR-ORIA-09-09.

A2. Unfortunately, EPA cannot provide pre-proposal comment or advice on applicant project proposals. As stated in the RFP EPA-OAR-ORIA-09-09 under section:

IV. PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

H. Pre-Proposal Assistance and Communications

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposal packages, provide informal comments on draft narrative proposals, or provide advice and/or guidance to applicants on how to respond to ranking criterion. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criterion, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

Q3. Are letters of support or endorsement considered part of the 13 page limit?

A3. Yes. An applicant's **ENTIRE** proposal package that they submit must be 13 pages or less, as stated in "C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria number 7" and "C. Content of Proposal Submission".

Q4. What type of asthma care education activities are covered under this RFP?

A4. With respect to asthma, only those activities that directly address environmental factors that may influence asthma onset or exacerbation are eligible for funding under this RFP (although ancillary activities related to medical management are acceptable). Applicants are encouraged to integrate environmental trigger avoidance into comprehensive asthma management initiatives, as recommended by the National Asthma Education Prevention Program, or NAEPP, found at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/naepp/>. Where substantial non-environmental management (e.g., medical management) activities are described in concept proposals submitted under this RFP, applicants should be prepared to document alternative funding sources for any substantial non-environmental components that are part of comprehensive asthma management initiatives.

Q5: Is EPA seeking projects at the local level?

A5: EPA's Indoor Environments Program makes progress towards its goal by funding demonstration, training, outreach and/or education **projects that achieve national scale impacts** by supporting or leveraging networks with proven delivery channels. The RFP "Scope of Work" on page 3 states...

EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible entities (as described in Section III.A) to conduct demonstration, training, education, and/or outreach projects that seek to reduce exposure to indoor air contaminants. All proposals:

- Must yield results that can be tracked, evaluated and reported on.
- Must clearly articulate a plan to produce results that have national-scale implications or benefits (in other words, this RFP is not designed to fund small-scale local projects).
- Must align with EPA strategic goals, objectives, outputs and outcomes as

described in Section IC, below.

Q6. The RFP does not appear to restrict activities that include smoking cessation. Is this assessment correct?

A6. Activities primarily intended to discourage non-smokers (e.g., teens) from starting to smoke, or which are intended to encourage or assist smokers in quitting (cessation), fall outside of EPA's authorities to conduct research and disseminate information on indoor air pollutants and are therefore ineligible for funding through this Request for Proposals. However, activities related to secondhand smoke are eligible for consideration within the context of the asthma priority area and as a component of an integrated approach, as these activities are described in Section I.B. Scope of Work.

Q7. Can you please tell me if in addition to the 13 page narrative, can we attach letters of support or other appendices?

A7. Letters of support or other appendices may be submitted, but will be included in the 13 page limit. An applicant's **ENTIRE submission must be 13 pages or less**, as stated in "C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria number 7" and "C. Content of Proposal Submission". If the **ENTIRE submission** is more than 13 pages **it will not be considered for evaluation**.

Q8. Do all outcome measures have to be quantitative, or can some also be qualitative? Also, please indicate whether your response applies to short-term and intermediate action outcomes, to long-term environmental health outcomes, or both.

A8. As described on pages 8-9 (C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs, 3. Outcomes), activities must yield measurable environmental outcomes that demonstrate progress towards project goals, objectives and long-term environmental health benefits. These outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health related or programmatic but must be quantitative. Applicants must estimate the intermediate **action** outcomes they will achieve and describe how they will quantify them.

EPA recognizes that intermediate and long-term environmental **health** outcomes can not always be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period and applicants may not always be able to quantify the link between intermediate and long-term outcomes. In this case, applicants should be able to qualitatively describe this link.

Please refer to pages 14-15 which describe the Work Plan content, referencing both quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

****Reminder****

All Questions must be communicated in writing as stated on page 21 of the RFP under "VII. AGENCY CONTACTS":

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

All questions or comments regarding this RFP must be communicated in writing via e-mail to Victoria Drew at QsonNationalIndoorAirRFP2009@epa.gov. Questions and answers will be

posted until the closing date of this announcement at the OAR Grants/Funding
Web site at http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html.